

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 18 June 2001

**REPORT ON: CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES:
TAYSIDE PARTNERSHIP**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 398-2001

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report advises members of the development of a Tayside Partnership for the future delivery of criminal justice social work services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the contents of this report;
- 2.2 Agrees to the establishment of a Tayside Partnership for the delivery of criminal justice social work services.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The service will continue to be 100% funded by the Scottish Executive, however each grouping will receive the allocation of funding as a single budget from April 2002.

4.0 AGENDA 21

None

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

None

6.0 MAIN TEXT

- 6.1 Members of the Social Work Committee will be aware that there have been ongoing discussions over the past two years regarding the future delivery of criminal justice social work services. The report from the Scottish Executive in 1998, 'Community Sentencing The Tough Option – Review of Criminal Justice Social Work Services' set out the task for local authorities to ensure that the delivery of criminal justice social work is effective, efficient and consistent and that it earns the confidence of both sentencers and the public.

The outcome of negotiations regarding the structure which should be put in place was finally confirmed by the Justice Minister, Jim Wallace, in a letter to COSLA on 4 May 2000. In the letter it was noted that the Scottish Executive had agreed to establish 11 mainland groupings for the delivery of criminal justice social work services. One of these groupings will comprise of Dundee City Council, Perth & Kinross Council and Angus Councils.

Since May of last year there have been further discussions between COSLA and the Scottish Executive with the aim of clarifying the expectations of the Executive in relation to the role of the groupings.

In a letter to Directors of Social Work on 10 April 2001, Niall Campbell, Head of the Justice Department at the Scottish Executive reaffirmed the objective of the restructuring exercise. He emphasised that the overall objective is to strengthen criminal justice social work services so that they are more attractive to the courts and so that sentencers are more ready to use community options instead of imprisonment.

The expectation from the Scottish Executive is that local authorities decide what form of consortium works best for them. However the structural models must meet the principles of preparing a single strategic plan and provide clear evidence that the groupings have looked at the needs of the area as a whole and that they work with a single financial allocation.

The end point as far as the Scottish Executive is concerned is to have:-

- stronger services, more used by the courts;
- the continuation of the provision of services by local authorities;
- the allocation of funding as a single budget to each grouping on the basis of a single strategic plan for each grouping;
- the creation of consortia of management arrangements which will ensure the effective and efficient delivery of services.

6.2 **Tayside Partnership for Criminal Justice Social Work Services**

It is proposed that the Tayside grouping will operate as a Tayside Partnership for Criminal Justice Social Work Services. In order to deliver on the agenda set out in the introduction to this report it is proposed that a Steering Group is established to oversee the working of the partnership. This group will comprise of the three relevant Directors, three convenors of the relevant committees and three heads of services responsible for criminal justice social work services.

It is anticipated that this group will meet on a six monthly basis.

In addition a Partnership Management Team will be formed comprising of the three heads of services who will meet regularly regarding the development of the Tayside Partnership and particularly with regard to meeting the principles as set out by the Scottish Executive. Much of the work will initially be to complete the first Strategic Plan which will be presented to the Steering Group in September of this year. Subject to Committee approval for the Plan it will be submitted to the Executive by the end of September.

It is also proposed that a strategic planning and performance team will be established across the partnership area, using the existing resources of the three criminal justice social work services.

During this financial year there will be no alteration to the current staffing establishments.

It is anticipated that the Partnership Management Team will be clear in the Strategic Plan about how the requirements and expectations of the Scottish Executive will be met and progressed in the Tayside area.

It is anticipated that the Strategic Plan will set out objectives and development proposals which will enhance the delivery of criminal justice social work services across the Tayside area and that where appropriate the three authorities will jointly deliver services which will be effective, efficient and consistent.

Details of the partnership's administration and operational issues will also be agreed and developed prior to 1 April 2002.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, the Director of Support Services, the Director of Finance and the Director of Personnel and Management Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 CONCLUSION

This report has outlined the background to the discussions about the future delivery of criminal justice social work services. The proposal to establish a Tayside Partnership will meet the expectations of the Scottish Executive and will be the basis upon which future developments for criminal justice services will be taken forward.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

10.0 SIGNATURE

Director of Social Work

Date

4 June 2001